THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION Magazine.

AUGUST, 1849.

Original Papers.

SCENES AND SIGHTS IN LONDON.

No. II.

GOLDEN LANE AND WHITECROSS STREET, ST. LUKE'S.

In giving brief notices of different localities in London, our object will be twofold:—a description of the moral and social condition of the inhabitants generally; and an account of the efforts that are being made for their improvement, through the agency of Ragged Schools. We are well aware of the many difficulties that may be expected in the prosecution of such a task. The real habits and condition of a class of people, living in a state of comparative isolation from the other classes of society—whose very vices are, in a great measure, hidden by the uses they make of the customs and privileges of civilized life—whose actions are modified, to some extent, by the restrictions of law, or performed unseen in the dark purlieus of the metropolis,—the real state of such a class of people is difficult to be ascertained, and not less difficult to describe when once discovered. We must, therefore, bespeak the indulgence of our readers, if, in bringing "hidden things to light," we may occasionally be compelled to make such statements as may not appear quite in consonance with usual notions of delicacy. This shall ever be avoided as far as possible, but in all cases we shall prefer "declaring what we know, and testifying that we have seen."

The neighbourhood selected for present notice is, perhaps, not so generally known as that to which reference was made in the Magazine for May; but it is one of those places where crime and misery have been accumulating for upwards of a century, and on which the efforts of Christian benevolence have been but scantily bestowed.

Within Goswell Street and Bunhill Row, Old Street and Barbican, there is included a large district, studded with courts and alleys, almost innumerable, and inhabited by a population of several thousands, who are living in a state of practical heathenism. When the old buildings in St. Giles's and other such places were taken down, and new ones erected, a large number of the wretched inhabitants, who were turned out of those miserable tenements, found fitting counterparts to their former habitations in the overcrowded courts and alleys of Whitecross Street and Golden Lane. By such means, and the ever-increasing tendencies of sin and ignorance, the district has become one of those hotbeds of pollution with which the metropolis so greatly abounds, and between which it is often difficult to draw comparisons. Although the dusky dens of poverty and crime may be supplanted by airy buildings and happy homes, and the poor thus deprived of the only dwellings for which they are able to pay, yet a different agency is required to effect the removal of our social evils—an agency capable of enlightening the understanding, quickening the conscience, and purifying the heart.

The people, and their vocations, differ in some respects from those of Westminster. Among the criminal portion in the latter place there is more system, more combination, especially among thieves and coiners. The former more resembles an Irish colony, where the great battle and aim of life is to procure the means of sensual gratification.

It would be difficult to find a class of people whose lives are less influenced by any trace of religious feeling. Although living almost under the shadow of the parish church, not one in fifty is ever within its walls. Individuals have been met with, who, by their own confession, have not been in a place of worship for upwards of twenty years. On visiting Whitecross Street one Sabbath morning, about ten o'clock, we found it so completely crowded with human beings that it was almost impossible to pass along. There could not have been less than 2,000 persons present, many of them covered with rags and filth, some buying, others selling, and not a few were obtaining money for their wearing-apparel, to be in readiness for the opening of the public-houses in the afternoon. The number of shops we counted open in this and the adjoining lane was 210, in all of which business was being carried on with great activity. Such is the usual state of Whitecross Street on the Sabbath mornings, and Golden Lane presents a spectacle in the evenings not less painful. *Then* it is the publican's harvest-time, when crowds of men and women may be seen, ragged, rough, and filthy, spending the remaining hours of a desecrated Sabbath in gross and stupifying sensuality.

In Golden Lane and Whitecross Street there are no fewer than 28 public-houses and beer-shops, all of the lowest order, and chiefly supported by the poorest class of the inhabitants. The money is often

obtained for this purpose by negotiating with "the leaving-house," or marine-store keepers. As necessary auxiliaries to the public-houses, these places are numerous, their being upwards of forty in the two streets above-mentioned, many of which are the common receptacles of stolen property, and all of them open on the Sabbath.

In addition to the public-houses, the district abounds with what is usually termed "whisky-shops," or private houses opened for the illegal sale of intoxicating drinks. They are generally opened on Saturday and Sabbath evenings, about eleven or twelve o'clock. Into these dens, working-men and even strangers are decoyed when leaving the public-houses, where they are often robbed of their weekly earnings, while in many cases their wives and children are starving at home. In a small court, consisting of about twenty houses, we once discovered four or five of these infamous places, in which the very children were taught to pick the pockets of those who frequented them. In the same court, a female was murdered about three o'clock one Sabbath morning, at which time her offspring, consisting of two boys, were both in Newgate, one of whom was said to have been then in for the sixth or seventh time; he has since been transported.

In regard to a people who are utter strangers to moral and religious principles, it need not be a matter of wonder when we state, that with a large proportion marriage is the exception instead of the rule. From this cause arises much of the juvenile depravity which prevails in the neighbourhood. Another cause is the Sabbath evening dances, which are held in private rooms, the admission to which is generally a penny; these are attended by the young of both sexes, from seven to eighteen years of age. The following instances in relation to these places came under our own notice. An elderly decent-looking female called at a house in one of the courts, and inquired where the dances were held. It was a Sabbath evening, between nine and ten o'clock. She said she was a widow, and had a daughter at home whom she left dangerously ill, scarcely expecting to find her alive on her return. "But," said she, "I have another, thirteen years of age, who has lately given me much vexation, by associating with bad companions, and attending these dances on Sabbath evenings. This evening I have been informed that she is at a dance in this court, and I have come to try if I can get her home." On receiving information, she proceeded to the place, which she found crowded with children and youths, in the midst of whom was her own daughter. She succeeded in getting her away, but they had not proceeded far when the girl again deserted her, and returned to her wicked companions.

About four years ago we met with a fine tall girl, who, although only fourteen years of age, was in the habit of attending the Sabbath evening

dances, and not returning home until two or three o'clock the following morning. About twelve months afterwards she told us, weeping, that she had just come out of prison, in which she had lain for three months, having been convicted of theft. She seemed deeply penitent, promised future amendment, but added that her companions in sin were striving to lead her back to her former habits. She could not read—had no friend or protector but an abandoned and drunken mother. Had a Ragged School been open to receive her, she might have been saved from a course of infamy, into which we have too much reason to fear she has since fallen.

About three years ago a few individuals endeavoured to make some provision for these poor children, by hiring a small room for a Ragged School in one of the courts. On the first Sabbath afternoon about twenty-five children assembled. A poor shoemaker and his wife, a visitor from the Ragged School Union, and the writer, composed the company of teachers. A scene then occurred which we shall not soon forget, especially as it was the commencement of our Ragged School labours. While the lessons were going on, the door was rudely thrown open, and a strong rough Irishman, furious with rage, rushed into the middle of the room, seized a little girl, threw her down on the floor, and commenced beating her in a most brutal manner. On seeing this, the writer interfered, but his remonstrances were replied to by a volley of oaths and threatenings, the sincerity of which he found speedily proved, by receiving an unmerciful blow on the chest. At length, the fierce intruder took his departure, to the no small gratification of the teachers and their frightened children. In the course of a few weeks the little company began to diminish. A dance was opened on the Sabbath evenings in the same court, directly opposite the school-room. The children preferred amusement to instruction, and the last Sabbath evening the room was open the writer found himself alone, without either teachers or children. The only relief from the monotony of his position was the sound of the music and the dance, which were being carried on with the greatest activity on the opposite side of the court. Passing from this small and unsuccessful beginning to the present time, we now find a large school in active operation, under the management of a Local Committee. It is open daily, four evenings each week, and three times on the Sabbath, conducted by about twenty voluntary and paid teachers. About 300 children in the several classes are receiving instruction, many of whom would otherwise have been doomed to lives of ignorance and vice. In commencing this undertaking, the Local Committee contracted a debt of about £200 in the purchase of the remainder of a lease and school-fixtures, an amount which, we regret to say, the public have not yet enabled them to discharge.

Many painful and interesting cases have occurred in connection with the school, with two of which we shall conclude this paper, as they may further illustrate the character and condition of the poor children. One Sabbath afternoon a wretched-looking female called at the school, and stated that the mother of two of the scholars was thought dying, and felt anxious for some one to visit her. One of the teachers accompanied her to the abode of the dying woman. The day was hot and sultry, and as he passed along the lane he was met by groups of men and women, rough and filthy, who were spending the sacred hours in obscene and idle talk. At last he entered a close and filthy court, in the farther corner of which he was conducted up a stair, where everything seemed in keeping with depravity and vice. The house was inhabited by eight families, and the filthy and heated atmosphere was almost suffocating. On reaching the top of the staircase, he was led into a room, where a scene presented itself of a most painful description. The only furniture it contained was a small table, and the frames of two chairs; the floor was covered with various descriptions of filth, which emitted a heavy sickening smell. On a miserable couch in one corner lay a slender, emaciated, young female, rolling, moaning, and covered with perspiration. In a constitution, ruined by a course of sin, consumption was doing its last and fatal work. At the foot of the wretched couch lay a poor babe, sick and wasted—the dying victim of a mother's guilt. Before the visitor departed, the two little boys returned from school. On a subsequent visit he was informed that they were the only survivors of six children. Their dying mother was only twenty-six years of age, and had never been married.

Among the children attending Ragged Schools, we believe there are not a few parallels to the following melancholy case: those who, by the imprudence or death of their parents, are speedily brought from affluence and comfort to a state of extreme destitution. "Let him who thinks he standeth take heed lest he fall."

In describing the case, we must lead our readers, in thought, to a large and fashionable house, not far from Portland Place, in which, about eight years since, there lay a dying mother. She was the wife of a medical gentleman, of highly respectable connections. Two genteel little boys stood by her bedside, who had just been brought from a boarding-school to see their mother die. On being raised up in bed, she took the youngest by the hand, and bade him farewell, telling him he would never have such a mother again. Shortly afterwards she died, and how far her statement proved correct our brief narrative will soon show.

While on a visit to the Golden Lane School, one Sabbath evening last winter, we observed two boys enter, whose extremely wretched

appearance arrested our attention. They had neither shirts, shoes, nor stockings; their feet were black and swollen, and chapped with the frost. The clothing of each consisted of an old coat and pair of trowsers, filthy and ragged. Of the 800 children then present, they seemed the most destitute, yet in the polite answers of the elder boy there appeared traces of a superior training. They were the same brothers who stood at the bedside of their dying mother! Shortly after their mother's death, the circumstances of the father began to change for the worse, which was greatly accelerated by a course of imprudence and folly. A few months ago we visited him, where he now lives, in a wretched room, for which he pays one shilling per week. Broken in spirits and in constitution, he is often maintained by the charity of others.

About a week after we first met with the poor boys, through the kindness of a few friends we enjoyed the luxury of having them stripped of their filthy rags, thoroughly washed, and supplied with clean clothing. So altered was their appearance, that on entering the class on the following Sabbath their teacher did not know them. We regret to say, however, that the younger boy—a fit subject for a Juvenile Refuge—was led away by bad companions, and is now in prison, suffering through his father's folly and the want of a mother's care. The other, we trust, by timely aid has been saved from ruin. He was placed in a situation as errand-boy, where for the last six months he has conducted himself well.

We trust that the labours of the Committee of this School may be yet more abundantly blessed, and that those out of whose abundance a little may well be spared, may encourage them with more liberal assistance.

NEW REFUGE AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

Our readers have been informed about Lord Ashley's Emigration scheme, through which 150 Ragged School Children were lately sent out by Government to Australia.

Perhaps they thought it was an easy thing to make up that number out of so many thousands attending our London Ragged Schools; such, however, was not the case. It was a very difficult matter. Much time and pains were expended on it, though the qualifications required were very low, yet so little advanced were the Ragged School pupils in knowledge, that it was a work of great difficulty to find 150 fit to pass the ordeal of the Emigration Commissioners. It was found that if this work was expected to go on successfully, some more systematic plan was

needed for getting boys up to the standard required—for giving them previous industrial training, and insuring good and efficient emigrants—emigrants who would prove an honour, and not a disgrace to the Ragged School Union operations.

It is now proposed to open an establishment for this purpose—an idea of the operations of which may be gathered from the following outline: The New Refuge to be open for homeless or destitute boys and girls, from any of the Ragged Schools, in connection with the Ragged School Union, who may be recommended as fit subjects for emigration by the local committee of the school, and approved of by the Central Society; the age of such boys and girls to be above fourteen, and the period of their remaining in the Refuge to be limited to six or nine months.

Such candidates for emigration to be free to go as emigrants, or to take situations at home, even after admission to the Refuge.

A simple and wholesome diet to be provided, and beds to those who are homeless or most destitute.

Instruction in useful trades, or handicrafts, to be given to all; as well as moral training, religious teaching, reading, writing, and arithmetic.

The best behaved and most industrious boys to be placed first on the emigration list.

The consent of parents, or other friends, to be obtained previous to the emigrants leaving their native land.

Provision to be made by a suitable outfit, and supervision and training on board ship, for the comfort and progress of the emigrants during the passage.

Fresh candidates to be admitted to the Refuge, as vacancies occur by emigrants leaving.

The instruction and training to be similar to that adopted at the Refuge in Pye Street, and in the Scotch Industrial Schools, the religious part being Scriptural and unsectarian.

The new Institution to be managed like the Pye Street Refuge, by a Sub-Committee of the Central Society, or by a body of gentlemen annually elected by the Ragged School Union.

PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DEPRAVITY.

MANY plans have been proposed, besides Ragged Schools, for ameliorating the condition of the lower classes, some of which we intend occasionally to notice. We have great pleasure in presenting our readers with a proposition of that excellent and most indefatigable magistrate, Mr. Rotch. His scheme is for the prevention of juvenile depravity, and the consequent diminution of the heavy burdens, cast first upon private individuals by numerous petty thefts, and lastly upon the county by the oft-repeated arrests, examinations, committals, prosecutions, and imprisonment of juvenile offenders. After showing that juvenile depravity has not been eradicated by the preaching of the gospel, the present means of education, or any system of prison discipline, he says:—

I propose that a bill should be passed by the legislature, the preamble of which should in effect state, that the fearful extent of juvenile depravity and crime in the metropolitan districts, and in large and populous towns, requires generally immediate interference on the part of the legislature. That the great causes of the said juvenile depravity and crime, appear to be the absence of proper parental or friendly care, and the absence of a comfortable home, and that all children above the age of seven, and under the age of fifteen years, suffering from either of these causes, require protection to prevent their getting into bad company, learning idle and dissolute habits, growing up in ignorance, and becoming an expense and burden on the country as criminals, and that such protection should be afforded by the State.

I propose that the various clauses of the Act should enact as follows—

I. That an Asylum for unprotected and destitute children be founded by the Government, to be called the Child's Home.

II. That commissioners be appointed to manage such asylum.

III. That provision be made in such asylum for instructing children in all useful arts, trades, and occupations suitable to the working classes.

IV. That unprotected and destitute children shall be deemed to include all children above seven and under fifteen years of age under the following circumstances:—Children driven from their homes by the bad conduct of parents—Children neglected by their parents—Children who are orphans, and neglected by their friends—Children who are bastards, and children who are orphans, and have no one to protect them or provide for them, or for whom no one does provide—Children who from their own misconduct have no protection or provision found them—Children who are idle or dissolute, and whose parents or friends cannot control their bad conduct—Children who are destitute of proper food, clothing, or education, owing to the poverty of their parents or friends, but whose parents or friends do not apply for or receive parish relief—Children who are destitute for want of employment, and children of the class which become Juvenile Offenders generally.

V. That any such child as aforesaid may be brought before any two justices of the peace, by any constable or other peace officer, or by any overseer of the poor or other parish officer, and evidence on oath being given to the satisfaction of such justices that the child is one of either of the classes enumerated in the foregoing clause, such justices may sign an order for the admission of the child into the asylum.

VI. That when in the asylum, if not claimed or redeemed as hereinafter provided, the children shall be subject to be dealt with as the state thinks proper, to serve as sailors or soldiers or workmen in public works, or as artificers or tradesmen, or as household servants, or as and wherever the state may require.

VII. That on a child being admitted into the asylum, inquiry shall be made by the commissioners as to the circumstances of the parents or other persons now by law bound to support the said child, and if found able to support, or to contribute to the support of the said child, the justices sending the said child to the asylum may make orders from time to time for any amount of contribution to be paid for or towards the support of the said child in the said asylum.

VIII. That such sums be collected for the use of the asylum by the overseer or rate collectors of the parish where the persons on whom the order is made reside, and that power be given to attach the property of such persons, or wages in the hands of masters, or due from masters of such persons, in cases of working people or servants, to satisfy the amount named in such order.

IX. That all children sent to the said asylum be taught several useful trades, arts, or occupations, besides the usual education of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

X. That if at any time any parent or friend should be able and willing to afford proper protection and employment for any child in the said asylum, subject to the approbation of two justices, the child may be permitted to leave the asylum on such parent or friend paying a sum to be settled by the commissioners of the asylum for such permission.

One general feeling which any suggestion for the taking of children away from parental care usually creates is, that it will be immediately abused by unfeeling parents wishing to get rid of the burden of maintaining their offspring, but it is conceived that the plan of taxing the parents or relatives for their maintenance in the asylum, as provided in the 7th and 8th clauses, will be an adequate check for the prevention of any such abuse, while the children becoming valuable by the sort of useful education that is given them, will no doubt induce many a parent to seek the means of getting their children home again, to assist by their valuable labour in support of the family. We know perfectly well that the first years of a boy's apprenticeship are never spent in really learning the trade he is apprenticed to learn—he is used by his master as an errand-boy, a servant, a groom, or even doing house-work, for some years, in many cases, before he begins to learn his trade—and why? because if he learned his trade at once, he would become so valuable that he could easily get work for himself, and so impatient to work upon his own account that he would be sure to run away before his time was up. We know by our experience in the House of Correction, at Cold Bath Fields, that a boy may be made an excellent shoemaker in twelve months, and that he might be made an equally good tailor in an equally short time admits of no doubt, while the business of a tinman, a shoeing smith, a painter, and an hundred others, are learned with similar facility. Each child taught a few of these useful arts, instead of being a burden upon would be a valuable addition to a family. I know I shall be told that the difficulty of providing for these children, however well taught, will be almost insuperable, and I shall see Parkhurst pointed at as a great example of this sad truth. It is in fact no example for me. There all the children *have been criminals*, have been allowed to drink deeply of the cup of vice, and if not after trial, have at any rate before trial been subject to the, I may say almost electrical, contamination of gaol association, so rapidly does it take effect. There the foul impress of felony or misdemeanour is stamped upon them all before they are offered to the public as useful members of society. The children of the asylum will be of a far different class. They will be taken before the actual commission of crime has been brought home to them, when surrounded by want, destitution and injustice, from the poverty, or drunkenness, or depravity of those who should be, but are not, their natural protectors, they would inevitably have fallen a prey to those who are ever on the look-out for just such suffering creatures, to make them, though only yet half willing, the tools of practised crime; to become, when further advanced in sin, hardened and emboldened in iniquity, and thus proper candidates for Parkhurst.

The experiment has never been tried of A STATE PROVISION *for innocent, but destitute and unprotected children*, nor of a compulsory payment from the parent for *the proper maintenance and education of his child*. I must not be told therefore of Refuges and Magdalens, and Schools of Industry, and Philanthropic Societies, and provisions for poor criminals on their release from prison, or of any results which have followed on their adoption, as reasons why my plan should not be tried—they are no examples for this purpose. I am satisfied from a long experience in such matters, that no difficulty would be found in placing out boys well taught, well brought up, under rules of strict discipline, and who have not yet become criminals. The expense of maintaining them as innocent children will be far less than that of maintaining them as felons, while we shall be destroying the root of this Upas tree,

which stands in the midst of every densely populated neighbourhood, spreading its branches so far in every direction that the good and virtuous even can at length reach them, and think they are destroying the tree by endeavouring to keep its unwieldly limbs within bounds by the pruning knife. A most fatal error!

How much longer will the overburdened rate-payers endure to see a drunken father, earning from thirty to fifty shillings a week, (and there are thousands of such,) turn into the gin-palace or the beer-shop with his hard-earned wages on the Saturday night, to spend it all in strong drink and debauchery. How much longer will that rate-payer be content to lose from his unguarded stall, or it may be even his well-watched premises, the petty articles which the starving children of that drunken sot are purposely sent out to steal to appease the craving of unsatisfied hunger? How much longer will that rate-payer be content to pay the enormous sums which are daily drawn from his two often slender resources, to pay the heavy cost of the repeated apprehensions by the police, examinations, remands, re-examinations, and committals by the magistrates and justices, trials and convictions by juries, sentences by judges, and imprisonments in our gaols, of those wretched children? How much longer will intelligent juries, men not only of common sense but of common humanity, continue to present the state of juvenile depravity, and the mode of disposing of juvenile depredators as unsatisfactory and inhuman, and be satisfied to see nothing done on either subject in the way even of an effort to improve? How much longer will the ministers who rule this great nation, be they of what politics or what party they may, remain deaf to the thousand tongues that are daily proclaiming, that nothing has yet met the hourly increasing evils of juvenile depravity, and not make some bold attempt to meet the difficulty in some new form and in some incipient stage, less appalling than that which idleness and destitution present when matured into vice and depravity? It must be remembered that the children with whom I propose to deal are the very same beings who are now dealt with by the state under the far more expensive character of criminals, and the simple question in the case, as a matter of finance, will be whether it would be more expensive to maintain any given number of innocent children, and educate them as I propose they should be educated, than to capture, try, and maintain an equal number of adult felons, at home and abroad, at the enormous cost at which they are now dealt with. No one could for a moment doubt that the balance would be greatly in favour of the new plan now suggested, if considered only as a financial one; but in every other point of view how far more desirable must it be to prevent than to punish crime? To change the system of education among the working-classes, and instead of teaching them to arrive at an excellence in reading, writing, and arithmetic, which only makes them seek places above that which nature destined them to fulfil, to have them taught those useful arts which they can employ in every situation of their humble station in society, learning to read and write, and keep accounts, merely as ancillary to those useful trades and occupations by which they are to get their living, and so to add to the general stock of comfort and happiness among their fellows. To stop the wages in the hands of the employer, which an abandoned and depraved mechanic would squander on his own ruin, and disburse it for him on the legitimate object of maintaining and properly educating his own offspring. In a word, to dry up the springs of juvenile depravity at their source, instead of endeavouring to deal with the raging flood of crime, which experience has long taught us when once abroad sweeps away with resistless force every barrier which finite wisdom has ever yet suggested for arresting its awful progress.

EDUCATION SCHEMES.

AMONG the various schemes lately proposed for educating the people, on a broader and more comprehensive plan than any yet tried in this country, is that lately published by a number of gentlemen of various religious denominations, resident in the county of Lancaster.

This plan being recommended by them to the serious consideration of *all classes, sects, and parties*, as sound and practical, we think a brief account of it may not be unacceptable to the readers of our Magazine.

This scheme professes to be neither governmental nor voluntary, but to partake of the good of both, without suffering from the disadvantages of either. It is, to give to the people themselves, in their *various localities, the power of taxing all equally, and of exercising control over the expenditure.* That is, *local rating, and local* MANAGEMENT. This would entitle all the people (who choose) to participate in the benefits of these schools. If all paid, all would be entitled to admission for their children, and thus it would be necessary that nothing which would exclude any should be taught in these schools. All catechisms and creeds would need, (as a measure of simple justice to all,) to be avoided. In order to have free admission, there would need to be free teaching. The Bible, in all its simplicity—not sectarian dogmas.

The aim would be to improve, enlarge, and elevate the mind and morals of our juvenile population, and secure to them as much religious teaching *as is compatible with religious freedom.* In order to this, it is proposed that every township in the county shall have a School Committee, to appoint teachers, levy rates, etc.

The schools proposed are, 1st. COMMON DAY SCHOOLS, for teaching reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, and geography; also, for training in moral and religious duties. The religious part to be from selections made by the Committee from the Bible.

2nd. EVENING SCHOOLS, for persons of the age of ten years and upwards.

3rd. INFANT SCHOOLS, for children under six years; and,

4th. INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS, for the purpose of affording food and shelter during the day to that portion of our juvenile population which has no apparent means of subsistence, save by begging and crime; of instructing them in the foregoing branches of education, and in some industrial occupation, which may lead them to prefer a life of useful activity to one of idleness, rescue them from destitution and misery, and give them an opportunity to become honest and respectable members of the community.

In addition to the School Committee and Committee of the Township, it is proposed to have a County Board, to sanction the books to be used, inspect schools, dismiss teachers, (whose conduct shall be brought under its notice by appeal,) diffuse information, establish normal schools, etc., a full account of whose duties, and other particulars of this scheme, will be found in a penny pamphlet, published by Simpkin and Marshall—"Plan for a General System of Education for the County of Lancaster."

Poetry.

TWO VIEWS, OR, THE RAGGED SCHOOL DIORAMA.

BY JOSEPH PAYNE, ESQ., BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

VIEW I.—Darkness.

Say, who are these, so wretched, wan, and pale—
Half-cloth'd, half-fed—whose tongues are heard to rail:
Whose features vainly we essay to trace,
Through hair *around*, and dirt *upon*, the face?
These are a set of England's ragged youth;
England, who boasts her love of gospel truth,
Which bids us feed the hungry, cheer the sad,
Instruct the ignorant, and reform the bad:—
England, who spends her boasted wealth's increase
On Courts and Judges, Prisons and Police;
Yet own'd not one asylum for the poor,
Where *wise prevention* takes the place of *cure!*
See how these children rush to vice and crime:
Some spend in begging half their daily time;
Some, taught to lie and steal, with art and skill,
Their wretched hands and ragged pockets fill;
Then haste away to fetid lanes and courts,
By stagnant pools, where infant misery sports,
And seek their home, scarce better than a sty,
Where drunken parents wild and wallowing lie!
The heart grows sick; too sad the sight has been;
Change we the picture, and reverse the scene.

VIEW II.—Light.

Say, who are these, who fill the scholar's seat,
Though badly cloth'd and fed, yet clean and neat;
Whose smiling features we with ease can trace—
Thanks to the well-comb'd hair and well-washed face!
And whose young voices, taught to read God's word,
In hymns of praise to heaven are often heard?
These are the self-same Ragged ones ye saw
Disdaining danger and defying law;
Their busy feet to honest haunts have run,
Their busy fingers honest work have done;
The begging trade, so highly priz'd, is o'er,
And he who stole has learned to steal no more:—
The parents on the child's improvement gaze,
Admire and wonder and amend their ways!
And ask ye what has wrought this change of state,
This wondrous change of scene?—I answer straight:
Firmness and kindness, patience and true love,
By Him inspir'd who reigns in heaven above:
Who, when on earth, with woes and cares oppress'd,
Young children took into His arms and blessed.

The scene is pleasing, and the thought sublime,
That some are sav'd from wretchedness and crime;
Yet this is but a small and scanty band,
One *green spot* in the *desert* of our land.

Christians of England! if your land ye love,
This one thing seek all other things above—
To teach the young, and thus for good exchange
The men and women of the coming age.
Would ye have Christian virtue's high reward,
In unity at home, and peace abroad;
Strive that the thousands of neglected youth
Who crowd our streets, may learn the way of truth.
A few have much achiev'd, but they require
Aid from *the many*—grant them their desire:
If useful lives and happy death ye prize,
Behold their deeds, and "GO AND DO LIKEWISE."

Editor's Portfolio.

THE HOUSE OF SALVATION.

"WE went for a few miles by the side of the river Zacken, with rocks and boulders in its bed in terrible confusion. Its waters occasionally disappear suddenly, and cease to flow for several hours; after which they as suddenly appear, and assume their usual level, a phenomenon not yet satisfactorily accounted for. We ascended to the Kockenfall; picturesque, but not equal to some we have seen. We went out of our way to call at the Rettungshaus, (the House of Salvation,) where orphans and children of the lowest and most miserable description are taken from evil habits and example, and clothed, fed, and educated by a pious man, who is the personification of faith and self-denial. He believed, as he told us, that he had a work to do, and God helping him, he could do it. Without any means but those which God sent him, mostly from persons he did not know, he set about building a house for his destitute children, a few of whom he had already gathered. He entered it before the walls were dry, without a bed, with only one spoon for seven persons, and scarcely a scrap of furniture of any description; yet he laboured on amidst incredible difficulties and hardships, till God sent supplies, and now he supports, educates, and trains to industrial habits, alone, 50 children, precisely in the same principles of confidence in God. He is often in difficulties, but supplies are sure to come in time for relief; and the children are trained to this dependence, for they are told the circumstance of want, and assembled for devotion when it occurs, and for thanksgiving when the answer from Heaven is sent by some human hand. Once he was almost in despair—no supplies in the house, every source of help drained; the children and himself had been very many hours without food, but they had scarcely left the Divine shrine, where in weeping and pleading they had presented their sad case, when the post brought an anonymous letter, with the Berlin post-mark, enclosing a note for a thousand dollars. Such is the reward of faith and humble labour in the service of a gracious Master! We took leave of the children, and dropped an offering into their treasury, deeply interested and instructed by the visit."—*Memoir of Mrs. Sherman.*

Literary Notices.

The Young Christian's First Reading Lessons in General and Useful Knowledge.—The Young Christian's Second Ditto. By the VICAR OF HARWELL. London: G. Bell, Fleet Street.

The peculiar features of these elementary school-books, and which especially render them appropriate for the use of Ragged Schools, are the superior excellence of the matter, the high moral tone which pervades it, its repleteness with intelligence, and the almost unsurpassable simplicity of the language. They are evidently the production of a mind deeply impressed with the infinite value of the human soul, and, therefore, with the importance of the work of training; but, at the same time, conscious of the wants, and sympathizing with the capacities of learners, to a degree we have rarely seen equalled. The subjects and sentiments, studiously selected, are facile and succinct in their arrangement; and, while of the most elevating tendency, often mixed with real poetry and sublimity of thought, are always apposite and appreciable. The language in the first Book is almost exclusively monosyllabic, and in the second confined to two syllables; yet every word is full of meaning. There is also this additional feature: the teaching is throughout felt by the pupil to be a personal matter; he is addressed directly by one who he feels is seeking to show him the nearest way to improvement and happiness. As most of the lessons refer to rural scenery and agricultural life, we think them remarkably suitable for youths in Ragged Schools who are likely to become candidates for emigration.

Bible Readings; or, the Young Christian's Third Reading Book.

The author's ability and judgment have been very usefully employed, in reducing to the capacity of young readers the portion of Old Testament history included by Genesis and Chronicles. The words rarely exceed two syllables, but with this modification, the language is mainly that of Scripture. It also possesses the advantage of brief explanatory foot-notes.

HINDE'S MEWS INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY.

THIS Society was formed in January last, and was solely originated by the elder youths belonging to the Ragged School, bearing the above name. As it forms a new feature in connection with such schools, we think it worthy of a brief notice. The object of the members is to promote their own improvement in religious and general information. Perhaps one of the chief features of importance is the growing conviction on the minds of these youths, that *they* must be the chief instruments in effecting their own elevation and improvement—a growing feeling of *self-dependence*. To inculcate this principle in the minds of the children must be one of the leading objects of the Ragged School teacher.

On the evening of the 6th inst., a Public Meeting was held in the School-room, got up entirely by the youths themselves, chiefly for the purpose of explaining the objects of the Society to the more careless youths in the neighbourhood, and inducing them to join them. This would involve the necessity of joining the school, as none are admitted members until they first become scholars.

A Report of the formation and progress of their little Society was drawn up, and read by one of the youths, who acted as secretary, and which did him great credit. From this report it appeared that since its formation a small Library has been formed, a Weekly Class instituted, and several essays—On Honesty—The Shortness of Life—Lawful Amusements, and other kindred subjects, had been prepared and read by the members. The little Meeting, which was well attended, was addressed by several friends and supporters of the School, all of whom seemed gratified with the order and proceedings of the evening. As the whole matter is under the direction and fostering care of the Master and Committee of the School, we are quite assured that everything will be conducted with strict propriety, and that it will tend to promote the great ends of Ragged School labours—the diffusion of the great principles of honesty, industry, and religion, in the minds of our neglected youth.

Intelligence.

HUNTSWORTH MEWS RAGGED SCHOOLS.

A Public Meeting was held on Friday, June 15th, at the Literary and Scientific Institution, Edward Street, Portman Square, to consider the propriety of establishing a Ragged School in the district of Huntsworth Mews. The Chair was occupied by the Hon. A. Kinnaird. Prayer having been offered up by the Rev. C. Hargrove, the Chairman expressed the gratification he felt in advocating the Ragged School system of instruction, and bore his testimony to the good that had been effected by its adoption.

The Secretary then read the Report, which stated that the school in George Street was full to overflowing, and that many who applied for admission were necessarily refused. This had been considered a sufficient reason for the establishment of another school in the district, to be called the Huntsworth Mews Ragged School. Sufficient funds had already been subscribed to meet the expenses of preparing and opening the school. The Ragged School Union, in addition to a donation of £10, had voted an annual grant of the same amount. Suitable premises had been already taken and fitted up at an expense of £80. Several friends had promised their services as teachers, and everything was ready for a commencement of operations.

The Lord Bishop of Norwich, in moving the adoption of the Report, and the appointment of officers, said he was glad to have an opportunity of saying a word on behalf of a cause which he considered one of the most promising and one of the most sanctified of the present day. Many objections had been made to the Ragged School system; but there had never been an Institution established, however good or valuable, that was not encountered by opposition, for people were always inclined to look at the objections before they studied the advantages. It had been said that it was impossible to reach the heart of the classes for whose benefit these schools were designed. He believed that it was possible to reach any heart; however hard it might be, it would be softened by kindness and judgment, and this the experience of Ragged Schools had abundantly attested. His Lordship urged the importance of contributing to the support of Home Missions. Those, he said, who subscribed to Ragged Schools, were subscribing at the same time to Foreign Missions, and that in the best way, for one of the objects contemplated was the sending out emigrants from the schools to Her Majesty's Colonies, with good characters and Christian principles, and every one who was thus sent out might become a missionary among the heathen. Thus, if he had but one guinea to spare, he would give it to the support of home operations, as he should be thereby aiding the cause of missions abroad. How deeply ought those to be thankful who were placed in a better condition—who had higher advantages than the miserable beings beneath them! and how gladly should they offer an acceptable sacrifice of thanksgiving, by endeavouring to raise their poor and suffering fellow-creatures to a condition in which they might enjoy the blessings of religion, become useful members of the community, and be rendered acceptable in the sight of God! His Lordship concluded his address by requesting the Secretary to call upon him, that he might have the pleasure of contributing £5 in aid of the school about to be established.

The Rev. George Fisk seconded the Resolution. He said, he could not imagine that any one would now debate the question of Ragged Schools; at any rate he never expected to hear an amendment moved upon any Resolution that might be proposed in their favour. He was glad that the Ragged School question had engaged his attention, for it had brought him acquainted with an important class of the community, concerning whose condition he was before in a great degree ignorant. The Rev. Gentleman narrated some anecdotes, showing the destitution of the Ragged Classes, and expressed his entire confidence in the effort made by the promoters of Ragged Schools to remove it.

The Rev. James Stratten proposed the

next Resolution. The rev. speaker adverted to the effect produced on the minds of children by Ragged School instructions, and to the impression not unfrequently made by their means upon their parents and relatives. He alluded to the insufficiency of the ordinary modes of punishment to repress crime, as shown in statistical returns, and contended that no plan would be successful but that of going to the root of the evil, and rescuing the lowest classes of society from the pernicious influences to which they were subject, and which led them almost unavoidably to live in the constant violation of the laws of their country. He urged that Ragged Schools should be supported for the sake of posterity, lest future generations should suffer the consequences of the evils that we had permitted to accumulate.

William Locke, Esq., in seconding the Resolution, spoke of the inadequacy of Sunday Schools to afford instruction to the poorest classes of society; of the necessity which, in common with other Sunday School Teachers, he had felt for the adoption of some means by which these classes could be reached, and to the subsequent establishment of the Ragged School system. Of all features in that system he admired none more than that of its unsectarian basis, which admitted all to a share in its operations. The speaker urged that every one might do something in behalf of the cause; in attending Committees, becoming Teachers, collecting for the schools, and otherwise. He then stated some of the practical results of the Ragged School system.

The Rev. Mr. Scoble briefly supported the Resolution. He bore his testimony to the excellence of the principles on which the Ragged School system is based, and adverted to the benefits of education generally. He showed that there are latent powers in every mind, and that these may be developed and trained either to good or bad objects. Every man had a spark of divinity within him, and this it should be our greatest care to draw forth and cultivate, rather than suffer the development of that which was evil.

The Rev. J. Robinson proposed, that as Ragged Schools are primarily intended to improve the moral and religious condition of the children, the instruction given in this respect will be strictly in accordance with the authorized version of the Bible, and the schools will be conducted on the broad and unsectarian basis of the Ragged School Union. In referring to the condition of the destitute juvenile classes of society, he said, that although they had no principle, they could scarcely be said to be unprincipled; they never had any principle; and they were guilty of no violation of any conscientious conviction rooted in their minds; they had been bred in an atmosphere of evil; anything else they had never seen, and the influence of any thing else they had never had; they were indeed but working out what might be termed the mechanical results of their physical condition, above the reach of any of the humanizing influences of society. Yet there was not a heart more susceptible of refined feelings than that of the ragged child, if treated with kindness, and with the direct aim and purpose of improving his present and future welfare. The basis of the instruction afforded was strictly religious, and no education but a religious one could ever bring about the desired reformation.

The Resolution was seconded by Mr. James Steward, and passed unanimously.

On the motion of Mr. Payne, seconded by Mr. Hanson, a vote of thanks was accorded to the Chairman. A hymn having been sung, the Meeting terminated.

GROTTO PASSAGE RAGGED AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

THE Annual Meeting of the above Schools was held on Friday afternoon, June 29th, in the New Room, at the Bazaar, Baker Street, Portman Square, the Right Hon. Lord Ashley, M.P., in the Chair. A numerous and fashionable attendance assembled on the occasion.

The Meeting having been opened by Prayer, the noble Chairman adverted to the frightful condition of the classes of society coming within the scope of Ragged School instruction, and drew a vivid picture of the probable future state of the country, if the evils associated with that condition were permitted to continue and accumulate. His Lordship appealed earnestly to the sympathies of the benevolent, entreating all who wished well to their fellow-beings to come forward and help the promoters of Ragged Schools in removing the evils existing at

the base of society, that a better superstructure might be raised.

The Secretary read the Report, from which it appeared that the institution was founded in 1846, and had gradually become extended to embrace the following objects:—An Infant Day School, at which there is an average attendance of 95. A Girls' Evening School, where reading, writing, and needlework, are taught to such as attend regularly, and conduct themselves well at the weekly class for religious instruction. An Evening School for Males, from nine to thirty years of age, in which secular instruction is provided for those who attend the weekly class for religious instruction. A Day School for Boys, from seven to fourteen years of age. Industrial Classes for such boys as distinguish themselves by regularity and good conduct at the Day School. A Refuge for Destitute Orphan Boys, who are provided with food, lodging, industrial, and other instruction. A Library and Reading Room in connection with the Evening School for Males, which is open nightly to the most deserving of those who attend there. On Sunday Morning, prayers and Scripture reading for the refuge orphans and boys who attend the Day School. A Sunday School for children of both sexes.

The Rev. Robert Walpole, in moving the adoption of the Report, and the election of officers for the ensuing year, said, it was unnecessary to expatiate at length in commendation of Ragged Schools, as their steady advancement was a sufficient indication of the immense benefits effected by them. He adverted to the evils connected with the congregating together of large masses of people in one locality. Large cities, he contended, were the natural home of the thief, the juvenile offender, and the deserted child. England, it was true, had risen to a high position among the nations of the world, but she had attained also a shameful pre-eminence in the rapid growth of her criminal population in her cities, and in the melancholy succession of apprentices to crime among persons of a tender age. Among the benevolent efforts of the present day, he did not hesitate to assign to those connected with Ragged Schools the foremost place. That these were producing a great moral revolution in the habits and lives of the children brought under their influence, no one who had watched their operations could hesitate to acknowledge. The speaker alluded to the reproach cast upon England by the late Dr. Channing, with respect to the condition of the poorer classes in this country, and urged that nothing but the general establishment of Ragged Schools could render such a reproach uncalled-for. He rejoiced that a change was fast taking place, and looked forward to the time when the uninstructed classes would no longer be neglected, but would be shielded from the temptations to which they were now subjected, and have placed within their reach the temporal and spiritual benefits of which they were now deprived.

Mr. Wright, of Manchester, seconded the Resolution. He noticed the forlorn and despised condition of the poor juvenile classes of the country, attributing it to the neglect from which they had suffered. He adverted to his own experience in prisons and elsewhere, and showed how the youthful heart may be won by kindness and attention, where every other effort to rouse them to a sense of their condition proves ineffectual. He instanced cases which had come under his own observation, of the change brought about in the condition of those who had once been considered the outcasts of society, but who had been fortunate enough to meet with kind instructors and friends connected with Ragged and Sunday Schools.

The Resolution having been adopted, the Rev. Mr. Reed proposed: "That this Meeting desires to express its deep sense of gratitude to the Giver of all good, for the blessings which He has bestowed upon this institution during the past year; and cordially to recommend it to the sympathy and bounty of those Christian people who, not living for themselves alone, are willing to employ some portion of their spiritual and worldly gifts among a class of the destitute so lamentably in want of guidance and protection." The rev. gentleman urged the Meeting to consider well their responsibilities in connection with the Ragged School question. They were all guilty to a greater or less extent; for had they been more alive to their responsibilities twenty years ago, the present state of things could not have existed. He would have them connect their personal responsibility with their liberality. They were called

upon to contribute to these schools of the substance of which they were but stewards, and they were no more at liberty to expend their wealth for their own indulgence only, than they were to misapply any other talent which God had given them. The speaker urged the necessity of making the Bible the basis of all education, and instanced the condition of the continent as a proof of the worthlessness of secular education, not based on religious evangelical truth.

The Rev. John Branch, in seconding the Resolution, said, that people would feel more happiness in doing good than would be felt by those who were the objects of their bounty. If, therefore, they would wish to enjoy the comfort of their own homes, the benefits and blessings of their own firesides, and increase their social and individual happiness, they could not do better than devote a portion of their time each day to the interests of poor ragged children. The rev. speaker advocated the claims of Ragged Schools on the ground of the temporal benefits received by the scholars, as well as the spiritual advantages which the schools were instrumental in communicating.

A vote of thanks was then passed to the noble Chairman, after which the Doxology was sung, and the Meeting terminated.

BERMONDSEY RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE second Annual Meeting of the above School was held in the British School Room, Great George Street, on Monday Evening, July 16th, D. W. Wire, Esq., in the Chair.

Prayer being offered by the Rev. J. Lynch, the Chairman called upon the Secretary to read the Report, which showed that signs of decided improvement have taken place, and that those connected with the school as teachers or officers continued to persevere in their labours. It was stated that there are at present on the list forty teachers, who had engaged to attend one Sunday in each month. Of this number thirty-two are engaged during the morning and afternoon in the Sunday Schools. It was regretted that the Committee had been unable to procure new school premises, or to establish a Girls' School, because the funds were insufficient to justify them in taking this step. The receipt of a grant of £10 from the Ragged School Union, as also some fancy articles, to be sold in aid of the funds of the school, and some wearing apparel and books for the use of the scholars, was announced.

The Chairman then spoke of the utility of Ragged Schools in general, and of the Bermondsey School in particular, stating that one look into the courts and alleys in the neighbourhood would be enough to convince, and plainly show that something was required to raise poor ragged children from their state of moral degradation, to a position in society where they might be useful to themselves and to mankind at large. This he said could not be effected by force, nor by harsh treatment, but by kindness and the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The Meeting was afterwards addressed by Mr. A. Anderson, of the Ragged School Union, the Rev. J. Lynch, Mr. Joseph Ingle, Joseph Payne, Esq., the Rev. J. Bodington, and Mr. P. Parker.

BROOK STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE Second Annual Meeting of the friends and supporters of this Institution was held at the Music Hall, Store Street, Lord Ashley, M.P., in the Chair.

The proceedings having been opened with Prayer, the Chairman said, that the School in support of which they had met there that evening, was one which had very considerable claims, both upon the confidence and the best efforts of the Meeting. Although not a very extensive school, it had, in proportion to the means which had been placed within its power, produced the happiest results; he should say in a larger proportion than in most schools of the kind which had come under his observation. Was it not, he would ask, monstrous, that in this great capital of the Christian world, with a population of nearly two millions, and with wealth, power, and resources, which were almost inconceivable, there should be so large a mass of the population to whom the name of their Lord and Saviour was as much unknown as it was to the benighted Africans in the centre of the world? There was no great person in this metropolis who must not bear his share of this responsibility. He hoped that the Meeting, small as it was, would not be indifferent to the appeal which would be made that night on behalf of the Brook Street Ragged School.

Mr. Gordon, the Secretary, then read the Report, which stated that the school was established in October, 1843, and was situate in a court or passage, in the centre of a very populous neighbourhood, inhabited by persons of the lowest class of society. It appeared that the average attendance of children, males and females, was 160, there being occasionally 200, and that in 1848 an Industrial Class was formed, and some of the children were taught boot and shoemaking, and horse-hair picking, thus paying for the expenses incurred; some of the boys had been clothed and fed; eighteen boys and three girls were provided for last year; three girls and many of the boys had obtained situations; ten remained in the school. Many of those boys had been convicted and imprisoned as thieves, but were now entrusted to carry horse-hair to the parties employing the inmates of the Industrial School, and not only this, but to receive the money for the work. In addition to this, a class had been formed for girls, who were taught needlework. The Industrial Class the Committee held to be of the utmost value. The Committee stated, that though the establishment was now conducted at a less expense, they had, nevertheless, been compelled, from want of pecuniary resources, to dispense with the services of the regular master, and a debt had been incurred of £100.

The Meeting was afterwards addressed by Mr. Farrer, the Hon. Mr. Campbell, Mr. Power, Mr. Jardine, Mr. Northcote, the Rev. Mr. Capel, and Mr. Gent.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A RAGGED SCHOOL IN DERBY.

On Thursday, 28th June, a Meeting was held in the Athenæum-room, for the purpose of establishing a Ragged School in Derby.

Sir Henry S. Wilmot, Bart., presided on the occasion. The Meeting was very respectably, though not numerously attended. Amongst those present were the Revs. R. Macklin, Wade, Wilkinson, Fisher, Abney, Dean, Pratt, Gawthorne, the Hon. and Rev. Alfred Curzon, and F. Cuthbertson, Esq., as a Deputation from the Ragged School Union, London.

The Chairman briefly opened the Meeting, and Prayer having been offered up by the Rev. E. H. Abney, the Hon. and Rev. Alfred Curzon, in proposing the first Resolution, bore his testimony to the national importance of the subject which had caused their assembling.

Wm. Evans, Esq., M.P., seconded the Resolution. He felt glad that in Derby the subject had been taken up, and he was sure that, if earnestly and judiciously pursued, great good would follow.

The Rev. E. H. Abney moved the second Resolution, in a speech full of interest. He argued, at considerable length, that it was impossible adequately to reach the children for whom Ragged Schools were originated by any existing system; and that, if these children were to be efficiently cared for, their utterly destitute condition, physically as well as morally, must be a special object in view.

Mr. Alderman Barber seconded the Resolution, in a very feeling and eloquent address, in which he advocated the claims of the ragged boys and girls to the protection of the community, and pointed out the deep interest which all ought to feel in reclaiming them from their present career of vice and crime.

Mr. Cuthbertson, (deputation from the London Ragged School Union,) in moving the third Resolution, said, from what he had observed in Derby there were parts of it which must contain a poor neglected race, over whom neither British, nor National, nor Sunday Schools had any direct or even perceptible influence. He concluded an energetic appeal to his audience, to lend a willing heart and a helping hand to this good work, by which they would promote the welfare of society and the glory of God, and gave some interesting details from the statements of the police, and others, showing the great good which had been effected in several localities in London through the agency of Ragged Schools.

The Meeting was afterwards addressed by Mr. Alderman Fox, Mr. Starey, the Rev. James Gawthorne, Mr. Alderman Newton, and other clergymen and gentlemen.

EXTRACT FROM THE LAST REPORT OF THE ABERDEEN SCHOOL OF INDUSTRY FOR BOYS.

The Boys' School of Industry was opened on 1st October, 1841. It has, therefore, stood the test of upwards of

seven years' experience. It was at first a doubtful question whether the children of destitution—of worthless and dishonest parents—trained to mendicancy and crime, could be rescued from their vicious, filthy, and debasing habits, and taught to submit quietly to the discipline of a school, to give regular attendance, and to acquire all the appearance and all the realities of social and civilized life. By the blessing of God the doubtful experiment has become an important and acknowledged fact; and this school, which for years shed its feeble and glimmering twinkle over a narrow locality, has now thrown a glorious beacon light over the wide extent of the British empire. The heart-stirring pleas of Dr. Guthrie have made the Industrial School for the destitute an object of deepest inferest, as well to the statesman as to the patriot, to the man of highest wisdom and the woman of purest sensibility, so that in every large town in the kingdom Industrial Schools have been erected, or are now contemplated, wherein the child of neglect and destitution may be fed, trained to habits of industry, and taught the saving truths of the Gospel; and already the moral and social effects are being manifested in the visible diminution of vagrancy and crime. Much has been done, but there is risk that the good which has been accomplished may soon be lost, not from any want of activity or zeal on the part of the managers of these institutions, but from the lack of hearty interest and pecuniary support on the part of the community. Aberdeen has hitherto nobly maintained its place in the course of improvement. Following its example, many other towns have established one or more schools, but none, like it, can say that they have amply provided for the wants of every necessitous child, have removed every apology and every pretence for begging, and entirely abolished juvenile vagrancy. The Committee earnestly trust that this may not be the idle boast of a day; but the conviction is ever recurring to their minds, that it is easier to commence a popular enterprise, than long, and earnestly, and successfully to carry it on. Many praise, and all acknowledge, the advantages of bringing the young under the humanizing influences of moral and religious training, but not a few entirely withhold or sparingly give pecuniary supplies; and it is with the deepest regret that the Committee advert to the fact, that one or two of the schools are almost on the eve of dissolution from the want of means; and it is evident that unless their earnest and repeated calls for aid are promptly and liberally responded to, the happy and hopeful inmates must ere long be cast out again, to misery and want.

The Committee rejoice to state that they can report as favourably of this school as at any previous period.

It will be seen from the following tables that the attendance, in point of number, and regularity, and the earnings in amount, will bear a comparison with those of any former year:—

On 1st April, 1848, the names of boys on the Roll were		96
New names entered during the year amounted to		66
And there were of re-admissions . .		35
		197
Of whom got into employment .	18	
Provided for by Parishes . .	7	
Left for the country . . .	4	
Removed by relatives . . .	16	
Left for various causes . .	41	
On account of sickness . .	25	
Died	4	
		—115

So that on the 1st of April last, 82 names remained on the Roll; and 25 of them are the children of widows, 2 are orphans, 3 are children of widowers, 37 have both parents living; but the fathers of sixteen of these have deserted their mothers, and 15 are illegitimate.

The following table shows the monthly admissions, attendance, and earnings—

	Admissions.	Attendance.	Earnings.
1848.—April . .	2 . . .	65 .	£6 7 6½
May . .	8 . . .	60 .	9 4 0½
June . .	5 . . .	63 .	5 17 1½
July . .	4 . . .	62 .	6 5 0
August .	7 . . .	60 .	4 6 0
September	2 . . .	64 .	5 8 4
October .	11 . . .	62 .	6 1 6
November	8 . . .	62 .	6 12 0
December	5 . . .	71 .	14 13 6
1849.—January .	5 . . .	69 .	11 3 0
February	2 . . .	71 .	8 18 0
March .	7 . . .	70 .	3 5 8
	66	779	£88 1 8½

The average yearly attendance being 64 7-12ths, and the average yearly earnings of each boy being about £1. 6s. 8½d.